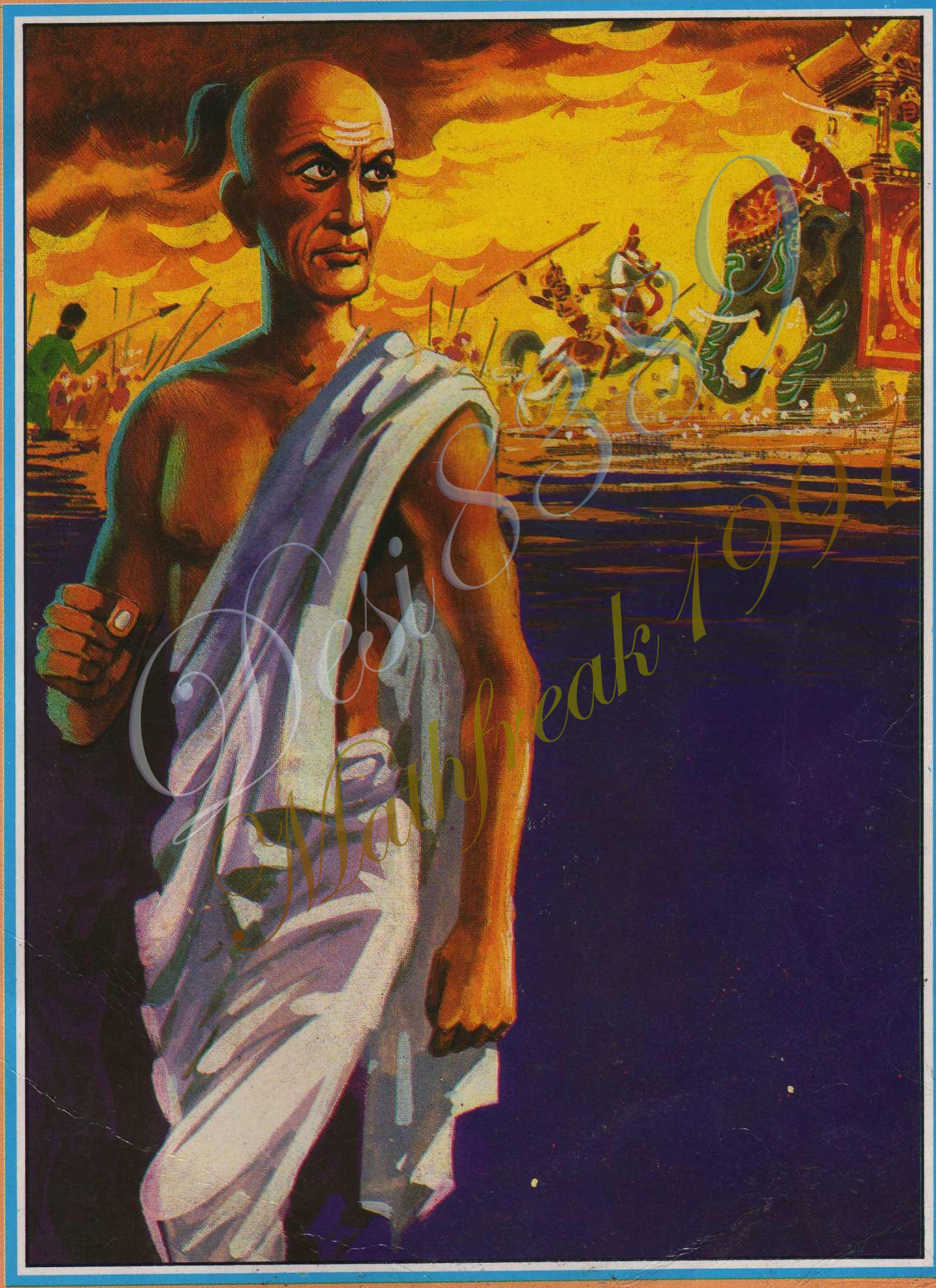
AMAR CHITRA KATHA

Chanakya

Vol. 508 Rs. 25



Amar Chitra Katha: the Glorious Heritage of India

IBH

Chanakya

Chanakya also known as Kautilya, the hero of this story is the author of the well-known Sanskrit classic *Arthashastra*.

Chanakya helped Chandragupta, the founder of the Mauryan dynasty, in gaining the throne of the Nandas. According to many scholars, Chandragupta's success as a king can be ascribed to Chanakya's advice and guidance.

According to Chanakya, the king at the time of coronation had to take an oath of service to the people. If the king misbehaved, his people had the right to remove and replace him.

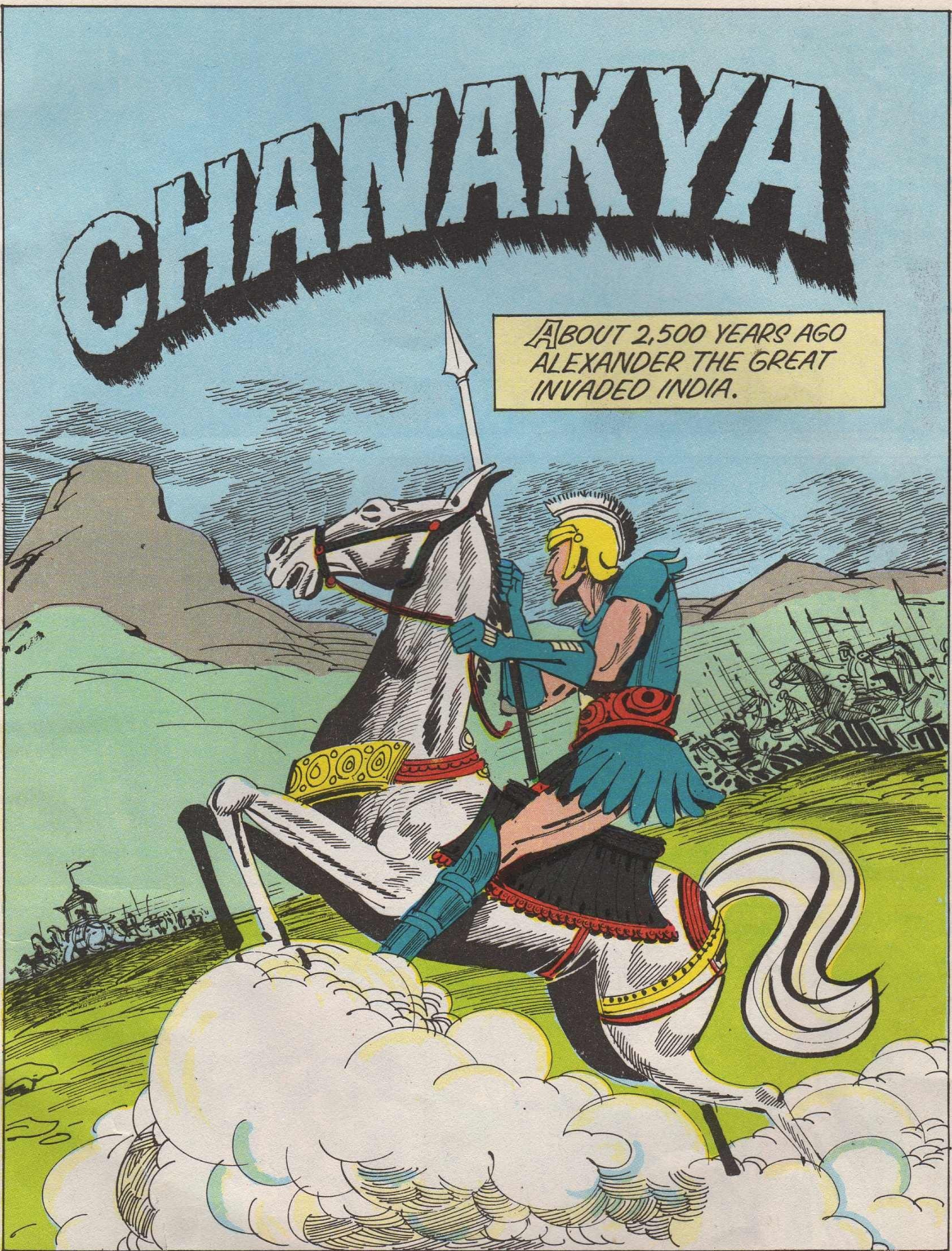
Kautilya's *Arthashastra* is a book on public administration. It discusses the duties as well as the rights of kings, ministers and other officers. It lays down the details on the various affairs of the state, of trade and commerce, of law, of war and peace, of diplomacy, of marriage and divorce, and of military strategy. Arthashastra still remains an excellent textbook of political diplomacy.

The story retold here is inspired by the classic Sanskrit play *Mudra Rakshasam* (The signet ring) written in the 9th Century A.D. by Vishakhadatta of Pataliputra which is believed to be the city of Patna today.

Script: Yagya Sharma *Artwork: Ram Waeerker*

Editor : Anant Pai

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• EDITOR– ANANT PAI • RETOLD BY– YAGYA SHARMA • ARTWORK– RAM WAEERKAR


ALEXANDER DEFEATED MANY SMALL DISUNITED INDIAN KINGDOMS.
A BRAHMAN TEACHER NAMED CHANAKYA WAS WORRIED ABOUT HIS PUPILS.
WHY HAVE THE OTHERS NOT COME?
THEY ARE AFRAID OF THE ENEMY SOLDIERS, SIR.
INDIA MUST BE UNITED TO GET RID OF THE FOREIGN AGGRESSOR. I SHALL WORK TOWARDS BUILDING A STRONG EMPIRE.

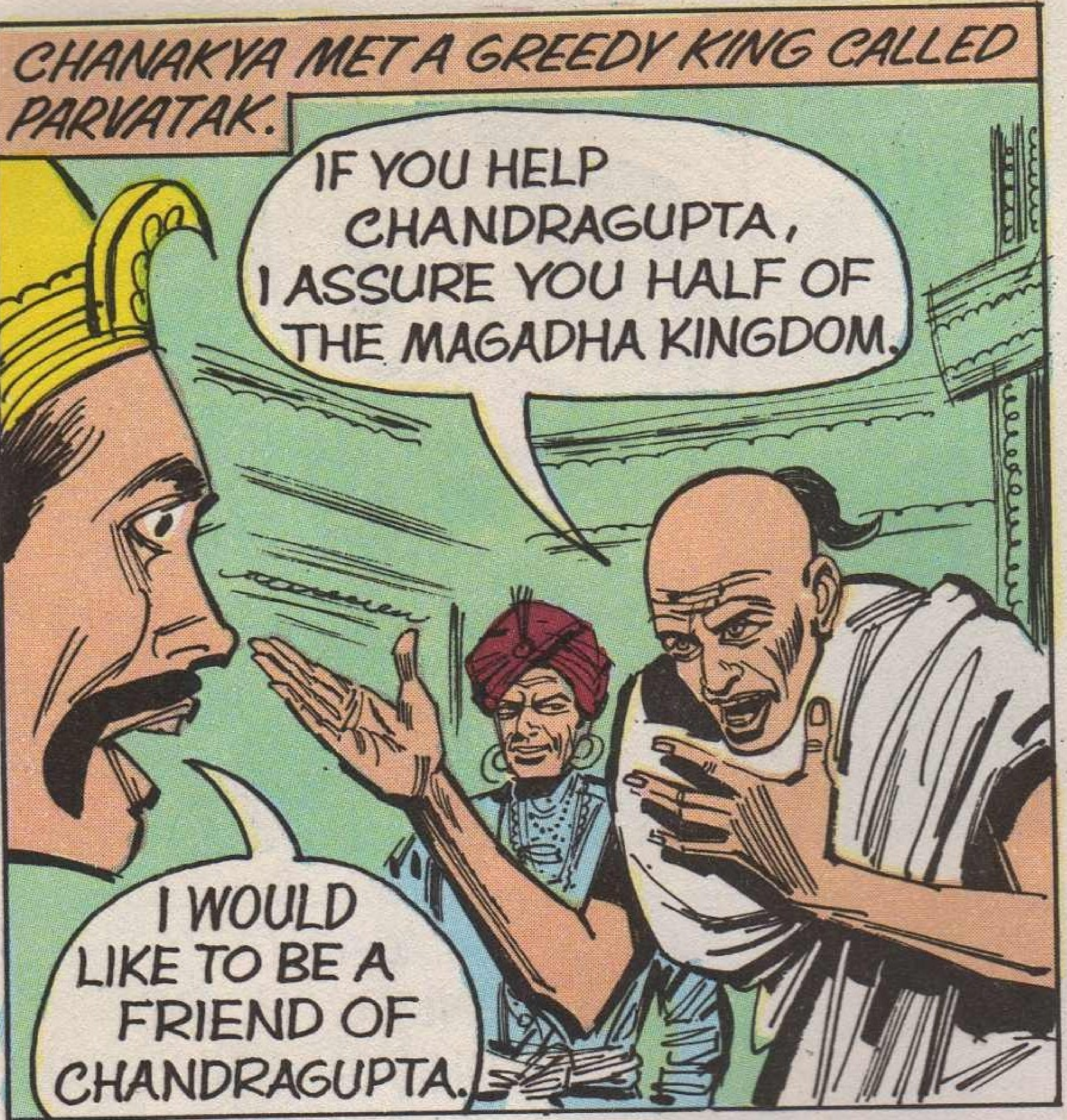

A FEW DAYS LATER, SHAKTAR, A MINISTER OF MAGADHA, THEN THE LARGEST KINGDOM OF INDIA, WAS STARTLED AS HE PASSED CHANAKYA'S ASHRAM.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SIR?
THIS STUPID GRASS HURTS MY FEET. I AM GOING TO DESTROY IT.
SHAKTAR HAD RECENTLY BEEN INSULTED BY HIS KING, DHANANANDA OF MAGADHA.
A MAN WITH SUCH A FIERCE SPIRIT CAN HELP ME AVENGE MY INSULT.
I WILL TAKE HIM TO THE COURT WHEN I CAN BE SURE, THE KING WILL BE DRUNK.
WILL YOU PLEASE COME TO THE PALACE? THE KING WOULD BE HAPPY TO MEET A SCHOLAR LIKE YOU.

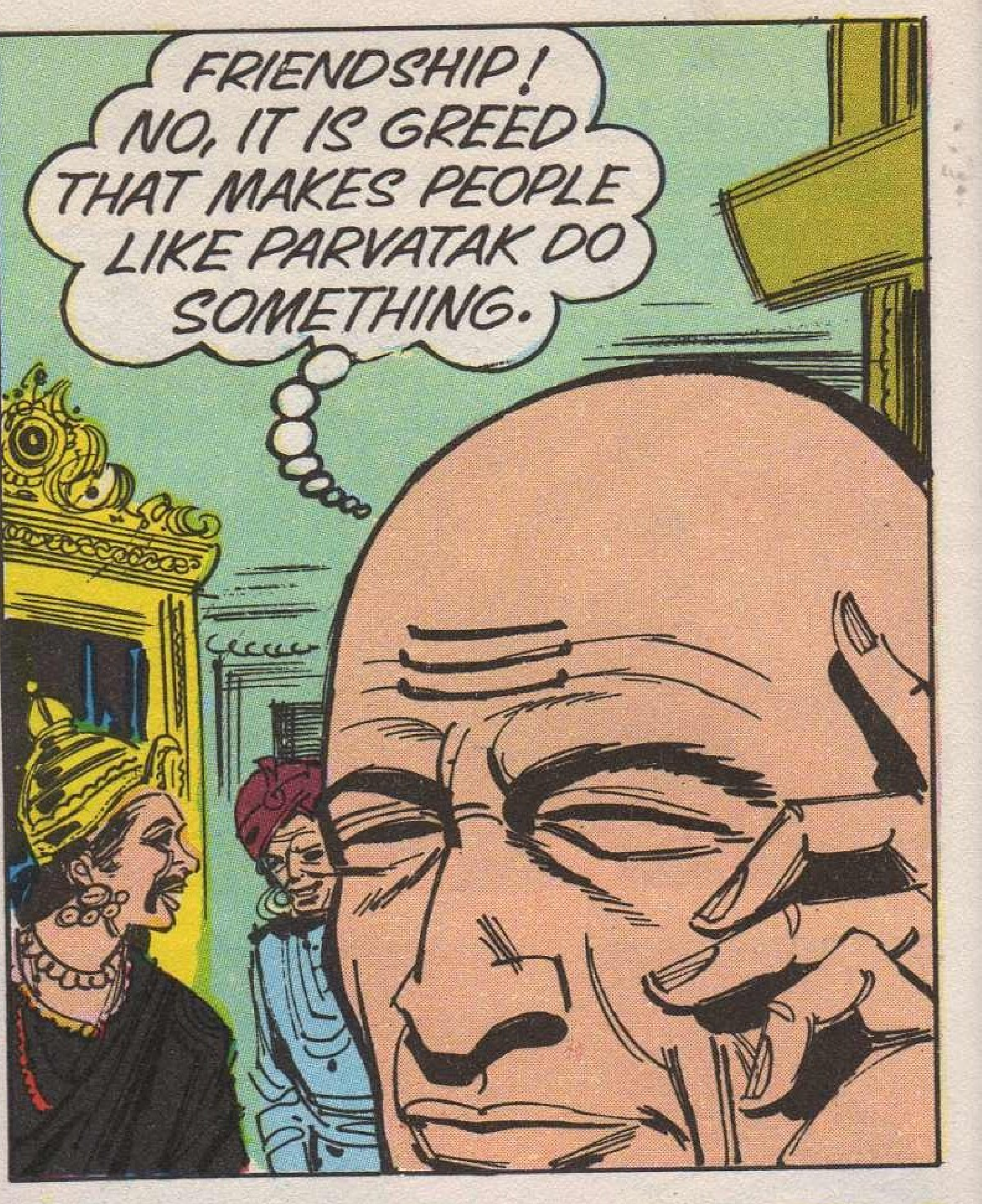

AT THE COURT OF KING NANDA –
YOU! WHO ARE YOU?
I AM A SCHOLAR IN CHEMISTRY, MEDICINE, POLITICS AND ECONOMICS.
HO! HO! RAKSHAS, LOOK AT THAT STUPID LOOKING SCHOLAR.
MAHARAJ, DON'T INSULT A LEARNED BRAHMAN.
MY PLAN SEEMS TO BE WORKING. CHANAKYA IS BOUND TO BE FURIOUS NOW.
HO, HO...
O! IMPUDENT KING, FOR THIS INSULT I PLEDGE THAT I WILL DESTROY YOU AND ALL YOUR SONS. THEN ONLY WILL I TIE BACK MY SHIKHA.
ARREST THE UGLY CREATURE.


BUT CHANAKYA ESCAPED WITH SHAKTAR'S HELP.
A STRONG KING AT MAGADHA CAN UNITE THE COUNTRY AND THROW OUT THE INVADER. NANDA IS NOT FIT TO RULE.
I KNOW SOMEONE WHO IS MOST SUITED TO RULE MAGADHA.
HIS NAME IS CHANDRAGUPTA. HE IS VERY BRAVE...
...VERY INTELLIGENT
...AND VERY POWERFUL. HE IS THE ELDEST SON OF KING NANDA. HIS EIGHT BROTHERS ARE VERY JEALOUS OF HIM. ALTHOUGH HE IS THE ELDEST, THE KING WILL NOT LET HIM SUCCEED TO THE THRONE BECAUSE HIS MOTHER IS A LOW-CASTE WOMAN.

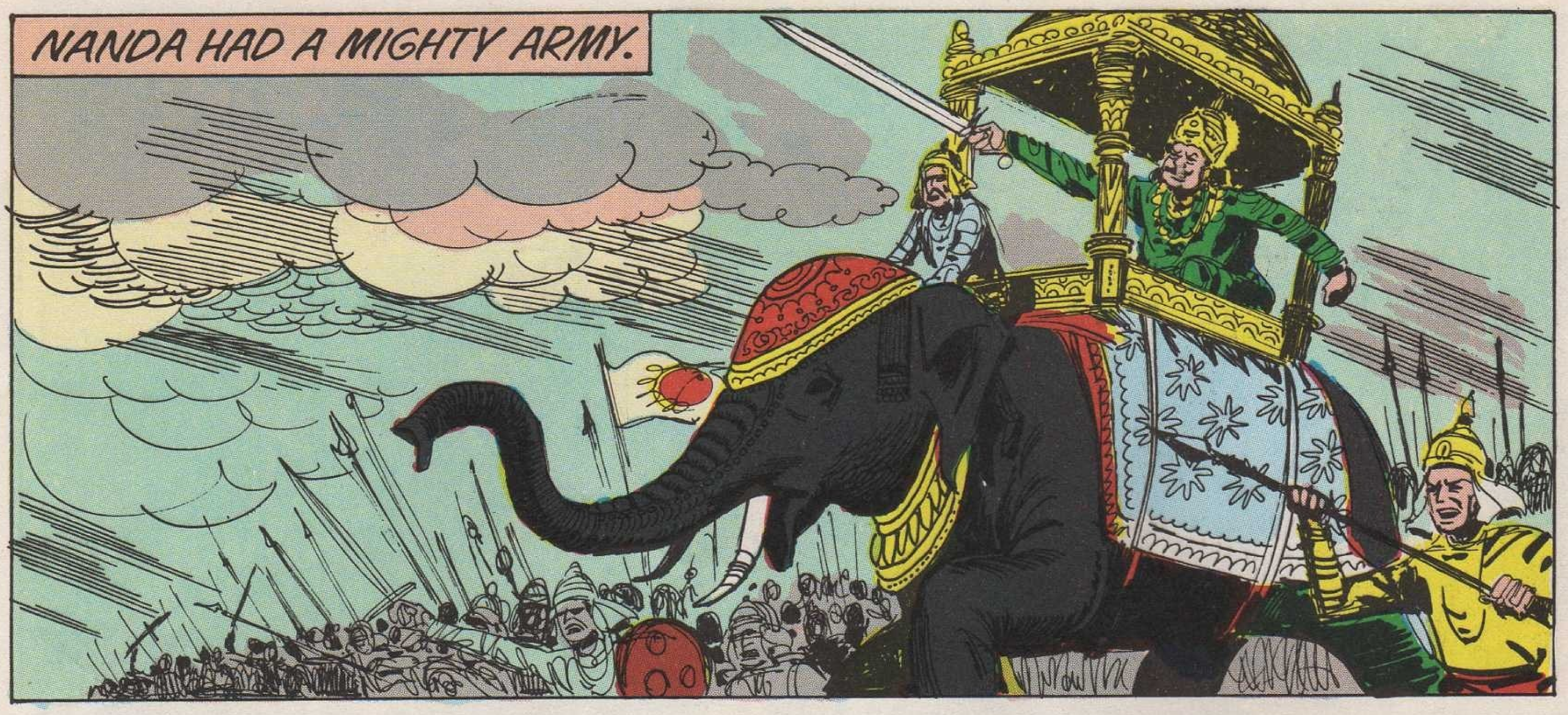

CHANAKYA AND SHAKTAR HAD A MEETING WITH CHANDRAGUPTA.
A POWERFUL KINGDOM LIKE MAGADHA CAN FREE THE COUNTRY FROM FOREIGN RULE. FOR THIS, MAGADHA NEEDS A BRAVE, INTELLIGENT AND DYNAMIC NEW KING.
AND YOU SHALL BE THE NEW KING.
I WILL BE HONOURED TO SERVE MY COUNTRY.
WELL THEN, GO AND RAISE AN ARMY TO DEFEAT NANDA.

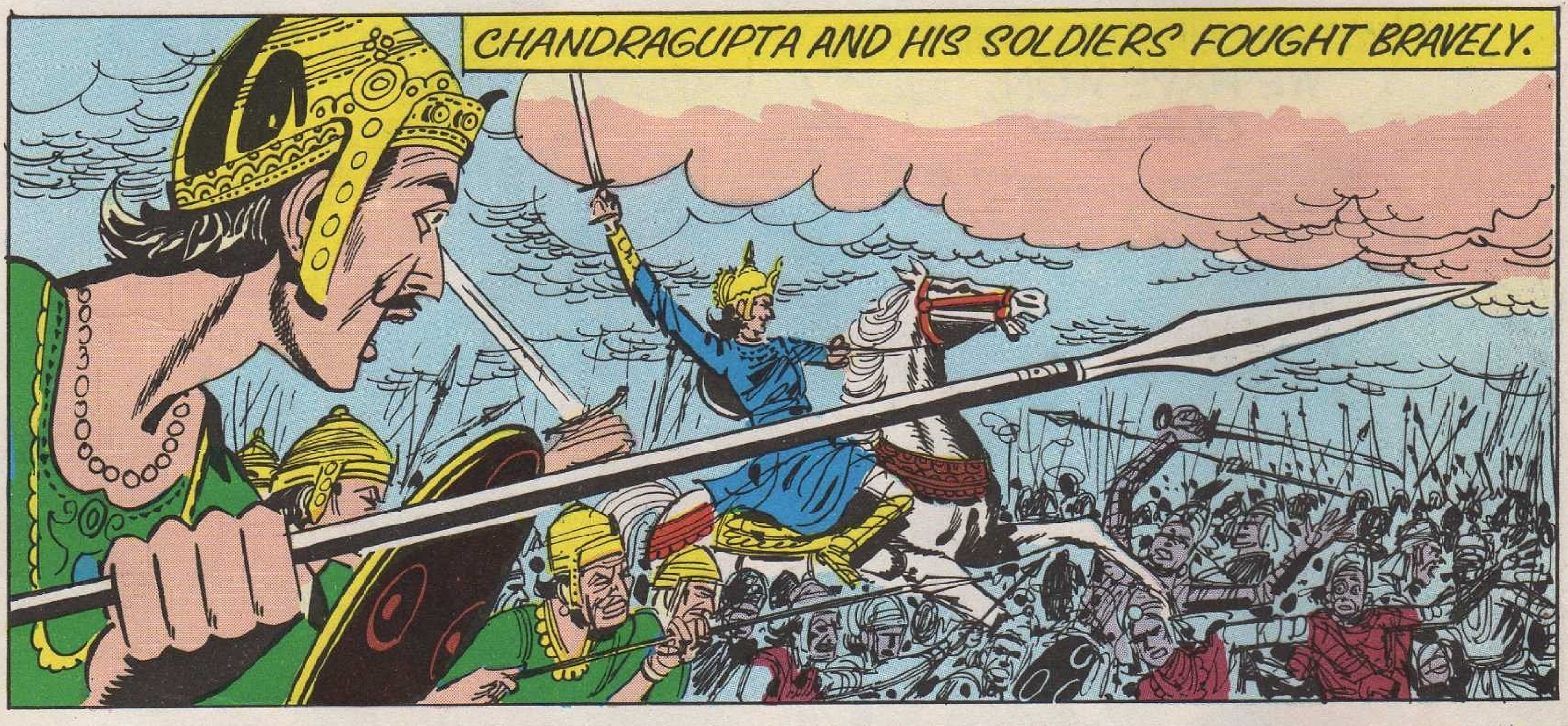

CHANDRAGUPTA TOLD THE SUFFERING PEASANTS OF THE STUPIDITY OF KING NANDA.
OUR COUNTRY IS IN GRAVE DANGER.
MAGADHA IS THE ONLY STRONG KINGDOM, WHICH CAN FACE THE CHALLENGE POSED BY FOREIGN INVASION. BUT THE REINS OF MAGADHA MUST BE IN STRONGER HANDS.
THUS HE WON MANY FOLLOWERS.
I THINK THE TIME HAS COME FOR US TO STRIKE.


CHANAKYA MET A GREEDY KING CALLED PARVATAK.
IF YOU HELP CHANDRAGUPTA, I ASSURE YOU HALF OF THE MAGADHA KINGDOM.
I WOULD LIKE TO BE A FRIEND OF CHANDRAGUPTA.


FRIENDSHIP! NO, IT IS GREED THAT MAKES PEOPLE LIKE PARVATAK DO SOMETHING.

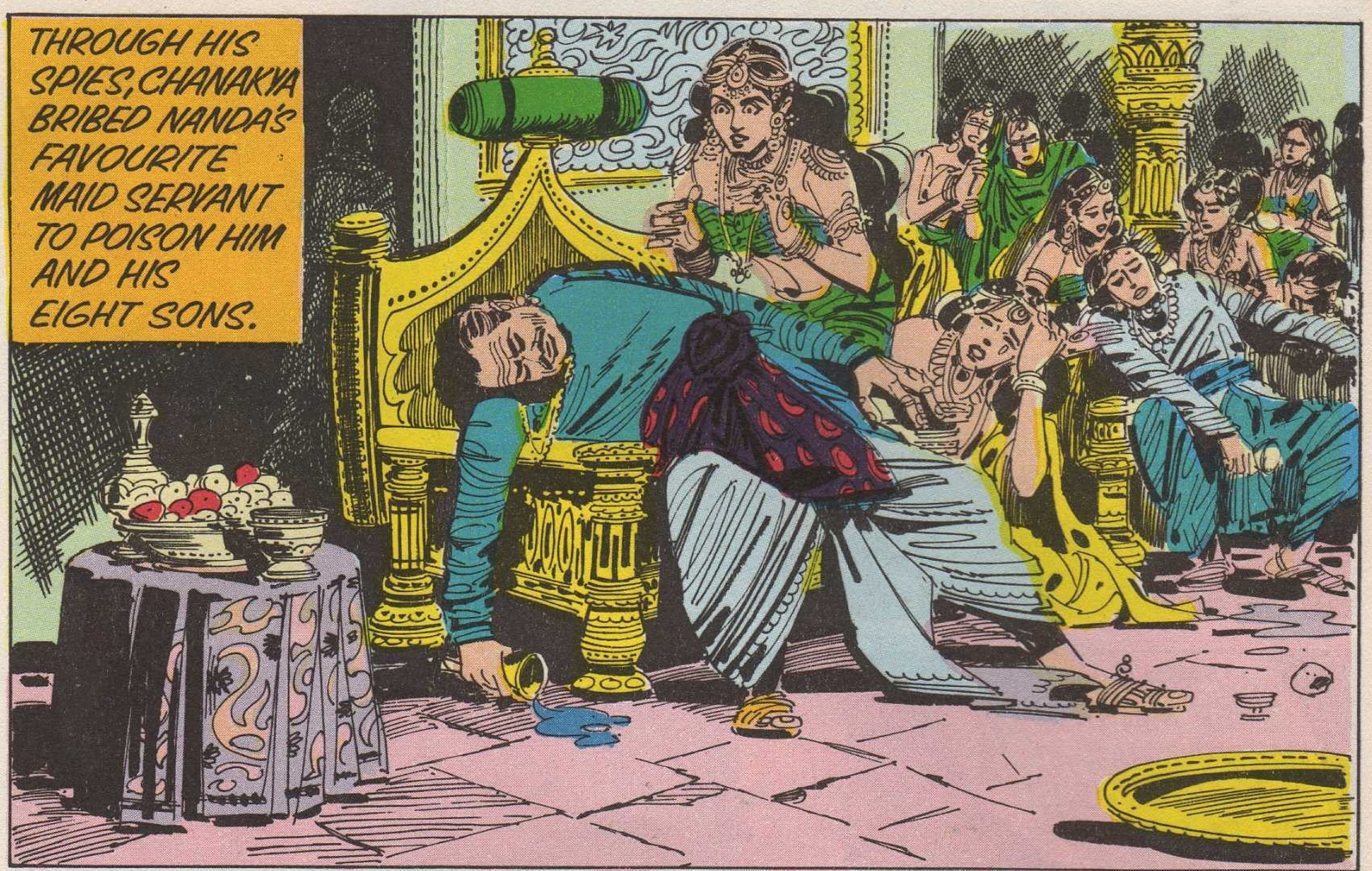

THE TIME IS RIPE NOW, CHANDRAGUPTA. YOU SHOULD ATTACK NANDA'S KINGDOM.


NANDA HAD A MIGHTY ARMY.


CHANDRAGUPTA AND HIS SOLDIERS FOUGHT BRAVELY.




FINALLY CHANDRAGUPTA WON.
NANDA'S ARMY TOOK TO ITS HEELS.
WITH YOUR ABLE GUIDANCE, WE HAVE WON, GURUDEV.*
THE GODS HAVE BEEN KIND AND YOU HAVE FOUGHT BRAVELY, CHANDRAGUPTA.
* TEACHER
.... BUT NEVER UNDERESTIMATE A DEFEATED ENEMY. NANDA HAS MANY FRIENDS. HE WILL ORGANISE HIMSELF AND FIGHT ONCE MORE.
WE SHOULD AVOID UNNECESSARY BLOODSHED.... YES! THAT IS THE ONLY WAY.


THROUGH HIS SPIES, CHANAKYA BRIBED NANDA'S FAVOURITE MAID SERVANT TO POISON HIM AND HIS EIGHT SONS.


WITH NANDA AND HIS SONS DEAD, NOBODY COULD STAND BETWEEN CHANDRAGUPTA AND THE THRONE OF MAGADHA.

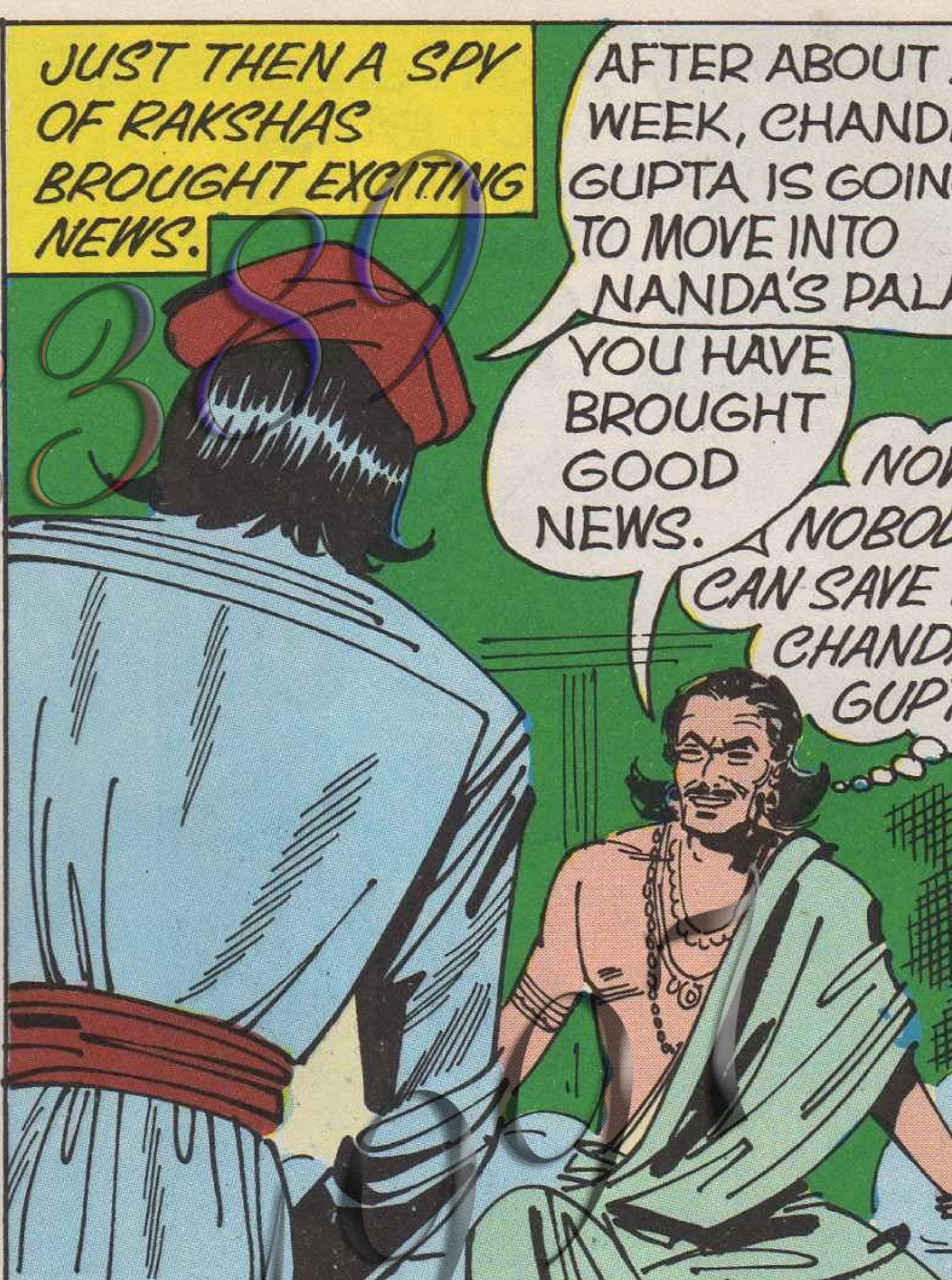

THE THRONE IS OURS AND NANDA IS DEAD, SO OUR TROUBLES ARE OVER.
BUT THE TASK IS NOT YET OVER....
...NANDA'S LOYAL CHIEF MINISTER, RAKSHAS, HAS ESCAPED. HE IS NOT GOING TO SIT QUIETLY.
CHANAKYA'S SUSPICIONS WERE JUSTIFIED. RAKSHAS WAS PLANNING TO CREATE TROUBLE.
HE MAY NOT HAVE BEEN A NOBLE KING BUT HE WAS MY MASTER. I MUST AVENGE HIS DEATH.


IT WAS GREED THAT MADE KING PARVATAK HELP CHANDRAGUPTA. A MAN LIKE HIM CAN BE MADE TO CHANGE HIS MIND.
RAKSHAS MET PARVATAK.
I HAVE IMPORTANT THINGS TO TELL YOU, O MIGHTY KING!
IN PRIVATE, RAKSHAS TOLD PARVATAK OF HIS PLAN TO DEFEAT CHANDRAGUPTA.
WITHOUT YOUR HELP, CHANDRAGUPTA WOULD NOT HAVE WON. THEREFORE, IT IS YOU WHO DESERVE TO RULE OVER ALL OF MAGADHA.


BUT ONE OF CHANAKYA'S SPIES WAS LISTENING.
BUT HOW DO WE GET RID OF CHANDRAGUPTA?
LEAVE THAT TO ME.
YOU WILL BE REWARDED FOR THIS INFORMATION.
I MUST WARN CHANDRAGUPTA.
CHANDRAGUPTA WAS SLIGHTLY ILL. RAKSHAS BRIBED THE PHYSICIAN TO POISON HIM.
IT'S NOTHING SERIOUS, YOUR HIGHNESS. THIS MEDICINE WILL CURE YOU IN A FEW DAYS.
WAIT!


A KING SHOULD NOT EAT OR DRINK ANYTHING UNLESS SOMEONE ELSE HAS HAD A PART OF IT IN HIS PRESENCE.
YOU DRINK THE MEDICINE FIRST.
THE PHYSICIAN DIED AND CHANDRA-GUPTA WAS SAVED.
A KING SHOULD NEVER TRUST ANYONE TILL HE IS SURE OF HIS LOYALTY.


RAKSHAS WAS UPSET OVER THE DEATH OF THE PHYSICIAN.
CHANAKYA IS VERY CLEVER. I HAVE LOST A GOOD FRIEND.


JUST THEN A SPY OF RAKSHAS BROUGHT EXCITING NEWS.
AFTER ABOUT A WEEK, CHANDRA-GUPTA IS GOING TO MOVE INTO NANDA'S PALACE.
YOU HAVE BROUGHT GOOD NEWS.
NOW NOBODY CAN SAVE YOU, CHANDRA-GUPTA!


THE PALACE HAS BEEN REFURNISHED, MAHARAJ! IT IS NOW READY FOR YOU.
WAIT, THE PALACE MUST BE CHECKED PROPERLY BEFORE THE KING ENTERS.


I HAVE CHECKED EVERYTHING MYSELF. ALL IS IN ORDER, SIR.
BUT I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THINGS FOR MYSELF FIRST.
CHANAKYA WENT THROUGH ALL THE ROOMS CAREFULLY AND FOUND EVERYTHING IN ORDER. OF COURSE, HE COULD NOT SEE THE ENEMY SOLDIERS HIDING IN THE BASEMENT.
YES, THINGS ARE ALL RIGHT.


BUT CHANAKYA WAS ALWAYS ALERT.
HEY! WHAT IS THAT?
HE SAW MANY ANTS COMING OUT OF A CRACK IN THE FLOOR, CARRYING GRAINS OF RICE.
GUARDS, SURROUND THE PALACE AND BURN IT.
IN THE RAGING FIRE, ALL THE ENEMY SOLDIERS WERE KILLED.


NOT KNOWING THE REASON, CHANDRAGUPTA WAS NATURALLY UPSET AT THE BURNING OF THE PALACE.
WHAT! MY BEAUTIFUL, NEW PALACE, BURNT TO ASHES!
A KING SHOULD NOT GET EXCITED UNDER ANY CIRCUM-STANCES. PLEASE COME AND SEE WHY.
WHEN I SAW ROWS OF ANTS CARRYING GRAINS OF RICE, COMING OUT OF THE FLOOR, I KNEW THAT ENEMY SOLDIERS WERE HIDING IN THE BASEMENT.
CURSE YOU CHANAKYA! I HAVE LOST SO MANY OF MY TRUST-WORTHY WARRIORS.


THE SITUATION IS GETTING WORSE. I MUST CHANGE MY STRATEGY.
ONE EVENING IN THE COURT OF CHANDRA-GUPTA, EVERYBODY WAS STUNNED BY THE BEAUTY OF A DANCER, WHO HAD JUST BEEN LED IN.
YOUR LOYAL SUBJECTS HAVE BROUGHT THIS LOVELY DANCER HERE TO ENTERTAIN YOU AFTER A HARD DAY'S WORK, MAHARAJ.
EXCELLENT TRICK, BUT YOU CAN'T FOOL ME, RAKSHAS.
SEND THIS DANCER ON TO KING PARVATAK.
BUT SHE IS MEANT TO ENTERTAIN ME.
DO AS I SAY!


LATER CHANAKYA EXPLAINED TO CHANDRAGUPTA.
THAT DANCER WAS A VISHA-KANYA*. SHE MUST HAVE BEEN SENT BY RAKSHAS TO KILL YOU.
*VISHA-KANYA OR POISON-GIRL —IN ANCIENT INDIA, BEAUTIFUL GIRLS WERE BROUGHT UP ON A SPECIAL DIET OF MEDICINE AND POISON. IF A PERSON TOUCHED A VISHA-KANYA, HE WOULD DIE IMMEDIATELY.
THEN WHY DID YOU SEND HER TO OUR FRIEND PARVATAK?
KING PARVATAK IS NO LONGER LOYAL TO US. HE HAS JOINED HANDS WITH RAKSHAS.
AND THUS CHANAKYA CUNNINGLY ELIMINATED PARVATAK.


RAKSHAS WAS VERY UPSET OVER THE DEATH OF PARVATAK.
HOW DOES HE GUESS EVERY MOVE OF MINE? IS CHANAKYA A MAN OR A DEMON?
BUT RAKSHAS WAS NOT A MAN TO GIVE UP EASILY.
I MUST TAKE REVENGE. I SHALL ASK PARVATAK'S SON TO HELP.
RAKSHAS HAS PERSUADED PARVATAK'S SON, MALAYAKETU, AND FIVE OTHER KINGS TO ATTACK MAGADHA.
THIS IS FAR MORE SERIOUS THAN I EXPECTED.
I ADMIRE YOUR LOYALTY AND DETERMINATION, RAKSHAS. I WISH YOU WERE CHANDRAGUPTA'S FRIEND.


RAKSHAS' FAMILY WAS HIDING IN MAGADHA. ONE OF CHANAKYA'S SPIES WAS KEEPING A WATCH ON THEM.
GURUDEV, RAKSHAS' WIFE ACCIDENTALLY DROPPED THIS RING.
EXCELLENT WORK. NOW WRITE A LETTER AND SEAL IT ALONG WITH THIS RING.
NOW I HAVE GOT YOU, RAKSHAS.
THE LETTER IS READY, SIR.
TAKE THE LETTER AWAY AND DO AS I TOLD YOU EARLIER.
AS PLANNED, CHANAKYA'S SPY SAVED A FRIEND OF RAKSHAS' FROM BEING PUNISHED BY CHANDRAGUPTA.
AND CARRIED HIM TO RAKSHAS.
I HATE CHANDRAGUPTA. HE KILLED MY FATHER AND BROTHER.
I AM VERY THANKFUL TO YOU. CAN I DO ANYTHING FOR YOU ?
I CAN'T GO BACK. LET ME STAY HERE.


MEANWHILE CHANDRAGUPTA HAD DECLARED THAT HIS VICTORY SHOULD BE CELEBRATED.
I DON'T SEE SIGNS OF ANY CELEBRATIONS IN THE CITY.
GURUDEV, CHANAKYA SAID THAT THERE SHOULD BE NO CELEBRATIONS.
CALL GURUDEV!
THIS IS NOT THE RIGHT TIME TO CELEBRATE.
I AM THE KING AND MY ORDERS WILL BE FOLLOWED.
DON'T FORGET WHO MADE YOU THE KING.


THE ENEMY ALSO CAME TO KNOW OF THE ARGUMENT BETWEEN CHANDRAGUPTA AND CHANAKYA.
WE SHOULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THIS SITUATION, KING MALAYAKETU.
YES, WE MUST.


LET US GET READY, I'LL GO AND PREPARE THE PLAN FOR BATTLE.

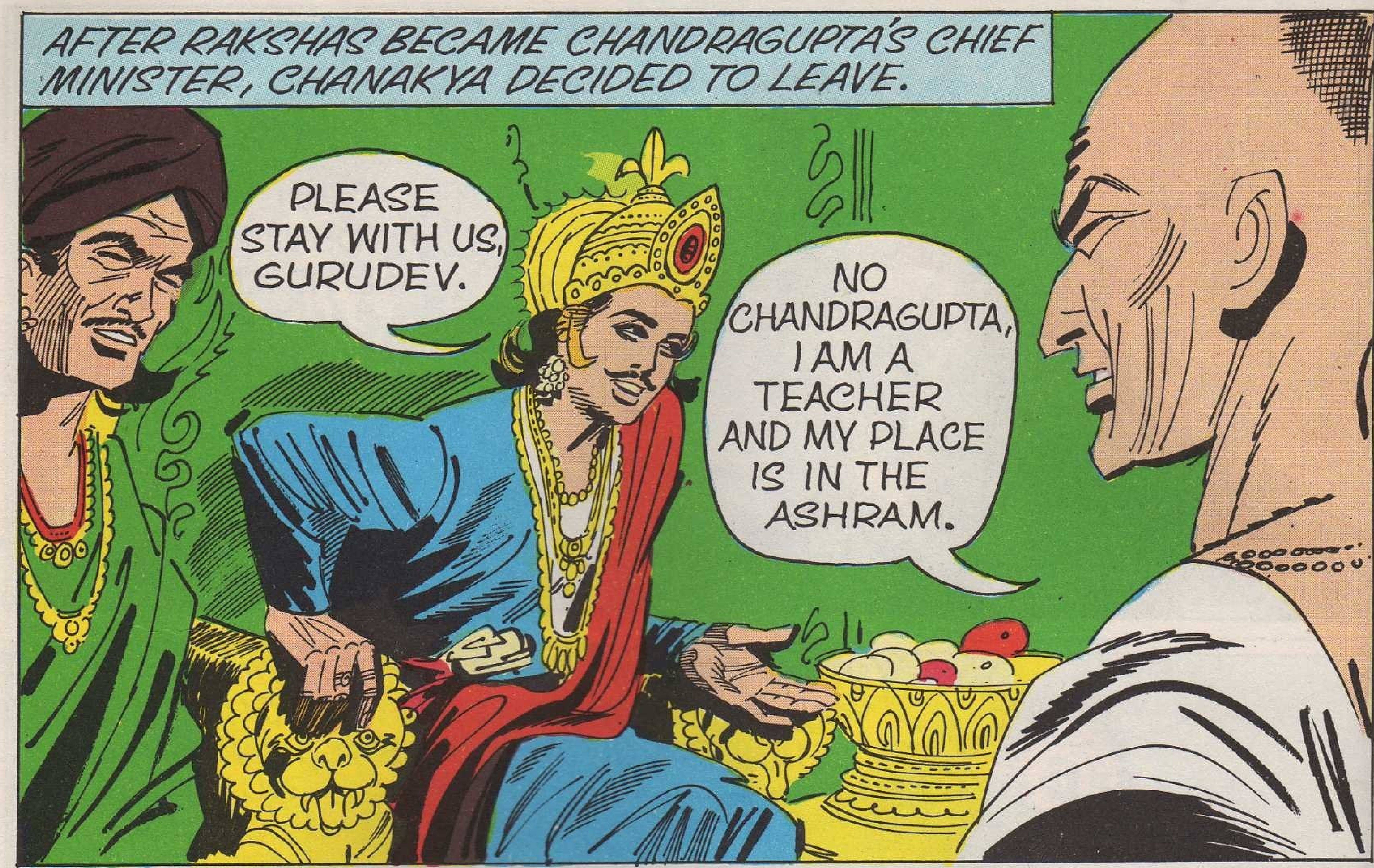

THAT SAME NIGHT, NEAR MALAYAKETU'S TENT, CHANAKYA'S SPY WAS CAUGHT.
HALT! WHO GOES THERE? CATCH HIM!

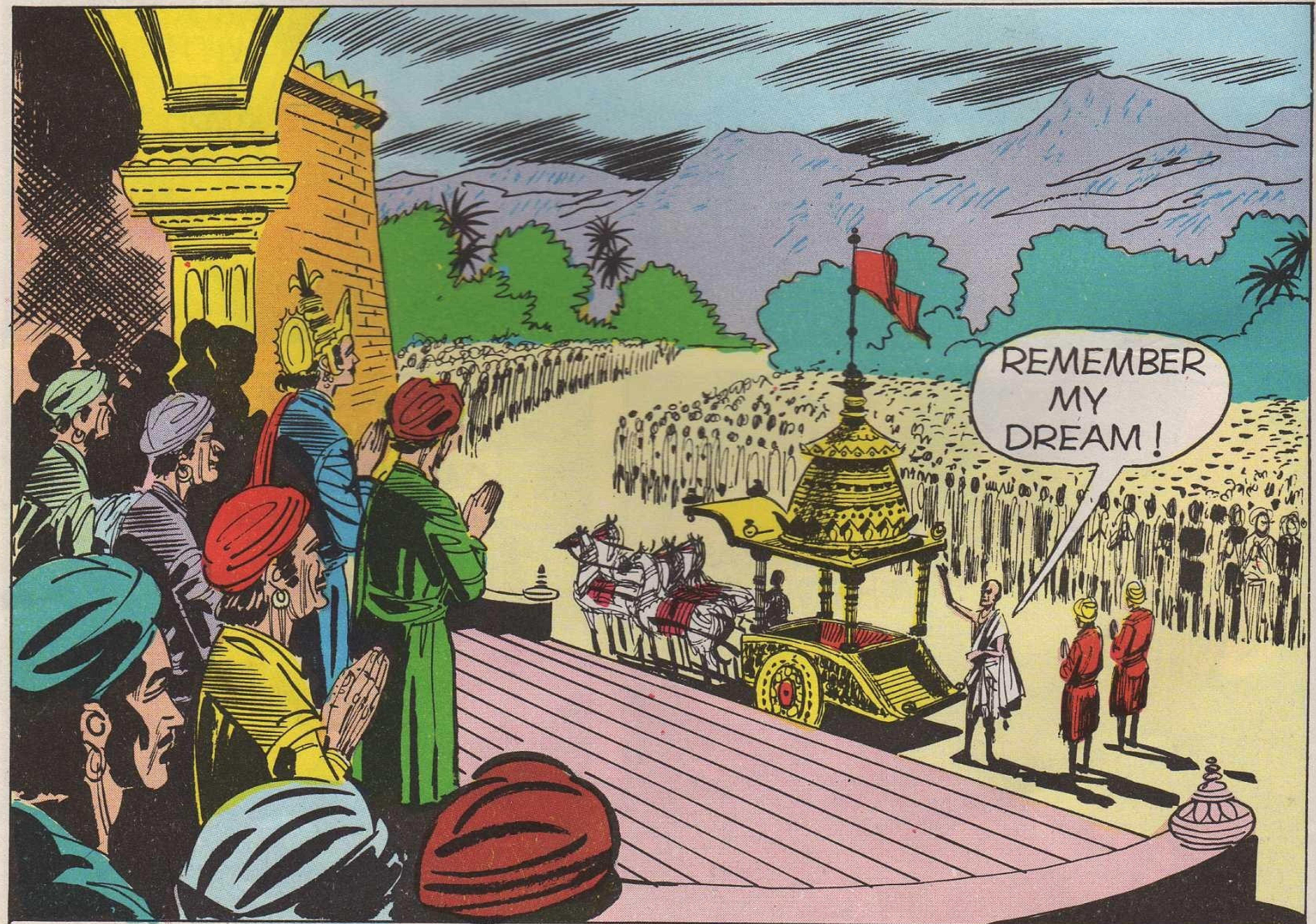

THE SPY ALLOWED HIMSELF TO BE CAUGHT AS PLANNED BY CHANAKYA. HE WAS BROUGHT BEFORE KING MALAYAKETU.
HE WAS CARRYING THIS LETTER, SIR.
LET ME SEE IT. OH! IT BEARS THE SEAL OF RAKSHAS.
Dear Chandragupta,
I am happy that you have removed Chanakya. I will now accept your offer to be your Chief Minister. I will help you to win the battle against Malayaketu. The five kings will betray him. For this you will have to kill Malayaketu and divide his kingdom amongst them...
Rakshas
TRAITORS! SO THEY WANT MY KINGDOM! GUARDS!
CHANAKYA'S PLAN WITH THE FAKE LETTER WORKED WELL. WITHOUT THINKING, THE RASH MALAYAKETU KILLED HIS ALLIES - THE FIVE KINGS.
RAKSHAS HAS COME, MAHARAJ.


SEE THE FATE OF THESE TRAITORS!
BUT WHY!
WHY!!! SEE YOUR OWN LETTER.
THAT IS NOT MY WRITING.
YOU CAN'T FOOL ME. I AM LETTING YOU GO ALIVE BECAUSE YOU ARE A BRAHMAN.
IT IS USELESS TO ARGUE WITH SUCH AN IDIOT.
FRUSTRATED, RAKSHAS LEFT FOR AN UNKNOWN DESTINATION.
I WISH MY KINGS WERE AS BRAVE AND INTELLIGENT AS CHANDRAGUPTA AND NOT SO STUPID.


IN THE JUNGLE, RAKSHAS SAW A CHARIOT COMING TOWARDS HIM.
WHO CAN THIS BE?
SALUTATIONS TO MINISTER RAKSHAS. I HAVE COME TO TAKE YOU TO PATALIPUTRA.
WHY? I HAVE NOTHING LEFT THERE NOW.
YOUR FAMILY AND CHANDRAGUPTA ARE WAITING FOR YOU.
YOUR FAMILY IS SAFE AND THE KING WANTS YOU TO BE HIS CHIEF MINISTER.


MY KING IS DEAD. AND I DON'T WANT TO TAKE YOUR PLACE.
BUT YOUR COUNTRY IS ALIVE, AND I CAN'T BE A MINISTER.
WHY? BECAUSE OF YOUR QUARREL WITH CHANDRAGUPTA?
NO. THE QUARREL WAS FAKED. WE QUARRELLED ONLY TO MISGUIDE KING MALAYAKETU WITH THAT LETTER WRITTEN IN YOUR NAME.
I HAVE A DREAM OF A STRONG UNITED INDIA THAT CAN THROW OUT THE INVADERS...
WITH YOUR HELP, CHANDRAGUPTA CAN MAKE IT A REALITY. PLEASE BECOME HIS CHIEF MINISTER.
AS YOU WISH, CHANAKYA.


AFTER RAKSHAS BECAME CHANDRAGUPTA'S CHIEF MINISTER, CHANAKYA DECIDED TO LEAVE.
PLEASE STAY WITH US, GURUDEV.
NO CHANDRAGUPTA, I AM A TEACHER AND MY PLACE IS IN THE ASHRAM.


REMEMBER MY DREAM !


AFTER BUILDING A STRONGER EMPIRE, CHANDRAGUPTA DECLARED WAR ON THE GREEK INVADERS.
THE GREEKS COULD NOT MATCH THE FORCE AND FURY OF CHANDRAGUPTA.
CHANDRAGUPTA DEFEATED THE GREEKS AND MARRIED THE DAUGHTER OF THEIR LEADER, SELEUCUS.


CHANAKYA LEFT ACTIVE POLITICS AND WENT BACK TO HIS ASHRAM TO TEACH. HE WROTE THE BOOK CALLED "KAUTILYA ARTHASHASTRA" WHICH EVEN TODAY IS CONSIDERED AN ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL CLASSIC.
WE HAVE MANY DISCIPLES IN THE ASHRAM, NOW.
NO ONE NEED FEAR THE ENEMY SOLDIERS, GURUDEV. THERE IS PEACE IN THE LAND NOW.